

NEWS

Comments

Seditionists

And the CIA: For Shame!

The misfortune in the flagrant and headlined revelations of the activities and relationships of the Central Intelligence Agency with student organizations, labor and foundations of various sorts is a misfortune that is being suffered by the American nation.

The unhappy fact about the revelations is not that the CIA did any wrong. It is that this country does not have, like the British have, an anti-sedition law to protect the United States government from its enemies within.

The CIA pursued a normal course in seeking to assist American organizations that had relationships with students, labor, scholars, artists, religious leaders and other societies and persons in foreign countries. It would be unthinkable that the CIA did not do the very things it has been accused of — accused of in most instances by persons who demonstrate their hatred by their speech and by their writing. The hatred of what? Of qualities of leadership the United States has demonstrated throughout the world. They are the antibodies in the American society.

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The alleged exposure of the CIA, in which fools and knaves have played no small part, has done grave injury to this country and is destroying a network of

And yet what the CIA has done is something that every foreign government that has pretensions to power in this world, has been doing for more generations than we have, and is doing today.

Due to the license with which seditionists may work in the United States, they get the headlines that they are after, they smear the organization that has been thwarting their friends abroad, they make money out of it, and they become names.

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This could not happen in France where such a revelation of government secrets, even if not well kept secrets, would result in confiscation of papers on the news-stands, the shutting down of presses, and the arrest of the responsible individuals.

In Britain, where there is just as much individual freedom as there is in America but a great deal less license to trifle with the security of the nation, there are standing laws against sedition that may be evoked at the drop of a hat to put behind the bars any persons whose actions may be described as inimical to the national security.

These are the other two of the great free democratic countries; but they have experience and intelligence enough to defend themselves from the enemies within. We have not. A vast damage has been done our country, not by the CIA, which is an organization of brilliant and devoted Americans; but by the enemies of the CIA, of our armed forces, of our business community, of our foreign policies, and of American stature in the world. For shame!

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False Hysteria

The outcry following disclosure that the Central Intelligence Agency had helped finance the National Student Association has been almost hysterically out of all proportion to the actual situation.

All kinds of sinister motives have been read into the CIA's connection with the student organization, with the implication that young people have been corrupted by Government subsidy and used as spies or in some other outlandish capacity.

Not surprisingly, critics of President Johnson, whether those opposed to him politically or those who take the left-wing line in any matter having to do with foreign policy, have seized upon the CIA-Student Association affair to make the President the target of new attack.

At the same time, America's Intelligence Service has been made to appear as though it were engaged in some nefarious conspiracy, with students as their tools.

On the part of those who support international Communism and who oppose U. S. foreign policy at all times, such tactics are understandable. But there is no sensible reason for others to join in this uproar. We happen to live in a jungle world, not in some Utopia where a country's intelligence service can operate in full view of the public at Broad and Chestnut streets.

A calm appraisal of the oversensationalized disclosure of the

National Student Association subsidies will make the hullabaloo of the past week seem ridiculous.

After questioning CIA Director Richard Helms, a subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee issued a statement saying that the CIA aid was given, at the students' request, to counter Communist attempts to take over foreign student organizations, by making it possible for American students holding independent views to participate in international meetings.

"It is no secret," the statement continued, "that since the end of the Second World War, the Communists concentrated on student organizations throughout the free world and by 1950 were successful to the point that they had little opposition. Patriotic and worried students in the U. S. were quick to recognize the situation. Leaders of their organization sought appropriate help. It was forthcoming, and has now served its purpose. Espionage was not involved: the survival of freedom was."

The intent of the CIA aid was patriotic; to help resist the inroads made by international Communism. What is the intent of those who are trying to defame and to belittle the CIA, and to embarrass the Government of the U. S. with their outcries over the student subsidy incident? Certainly they are giving aid and comfort only to our enemies.